

# Crawling Through the Pipeline: Exploring Discipline Policies in Minneapolis Schools

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## Introduction

Forms of school discipline such as zero tolerance policies and dismissal days are consistently being used as justification for the disproportionate number of youth being pushed out of their schools. This process is known as the school-to-prison pipeline where the youth who are pushed out face setbacks in their education and face greater exposure to the legal system and forms of confinement such as prison, detention centers, and in-house arrest. In my research, I argue that school discipline policies and school pushout contribute to larger systems of inequity seen both in Minneapolis and throughout the nation. In order to enact the necessary change to dismantle the school-to-prison pipeline, the voices of those working directly with youth must be heard, and restorative action must be paired with those conversations.

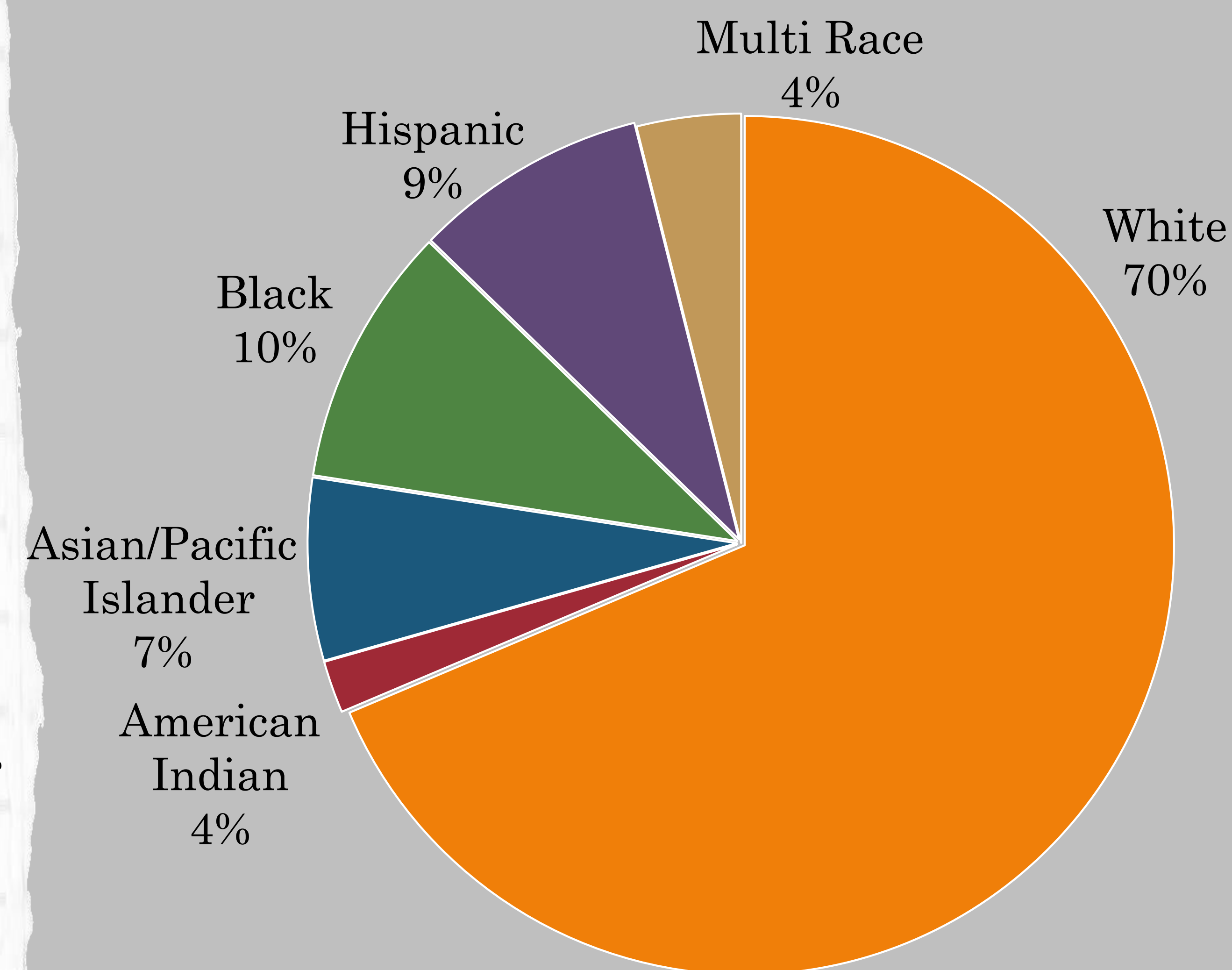
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### Works Cited:

Data obtained via personal interview, K. 10 March 2017. Available at MN Department of Education.

Morris, Monique W. *Pushout*. N.p.: The New Press, 2016. Print

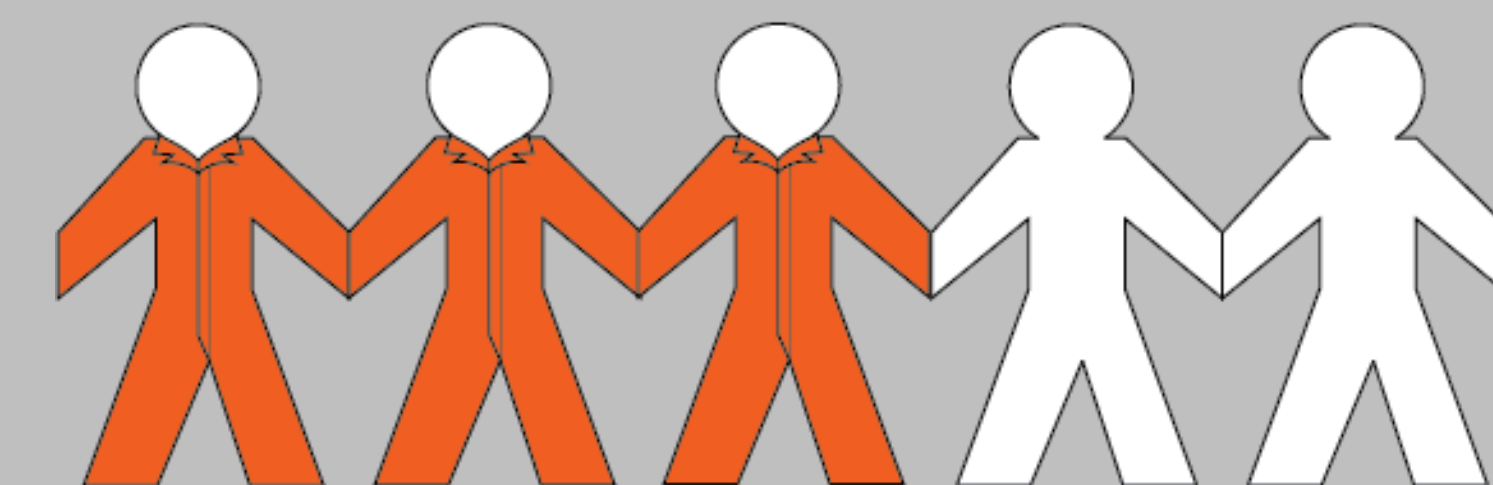
2014-2015 School Year % Total Enrollment



Students in Special Ed make up 13.4% of Total Enrollment but



Black youth make up 30% of Mpls Youth Population but



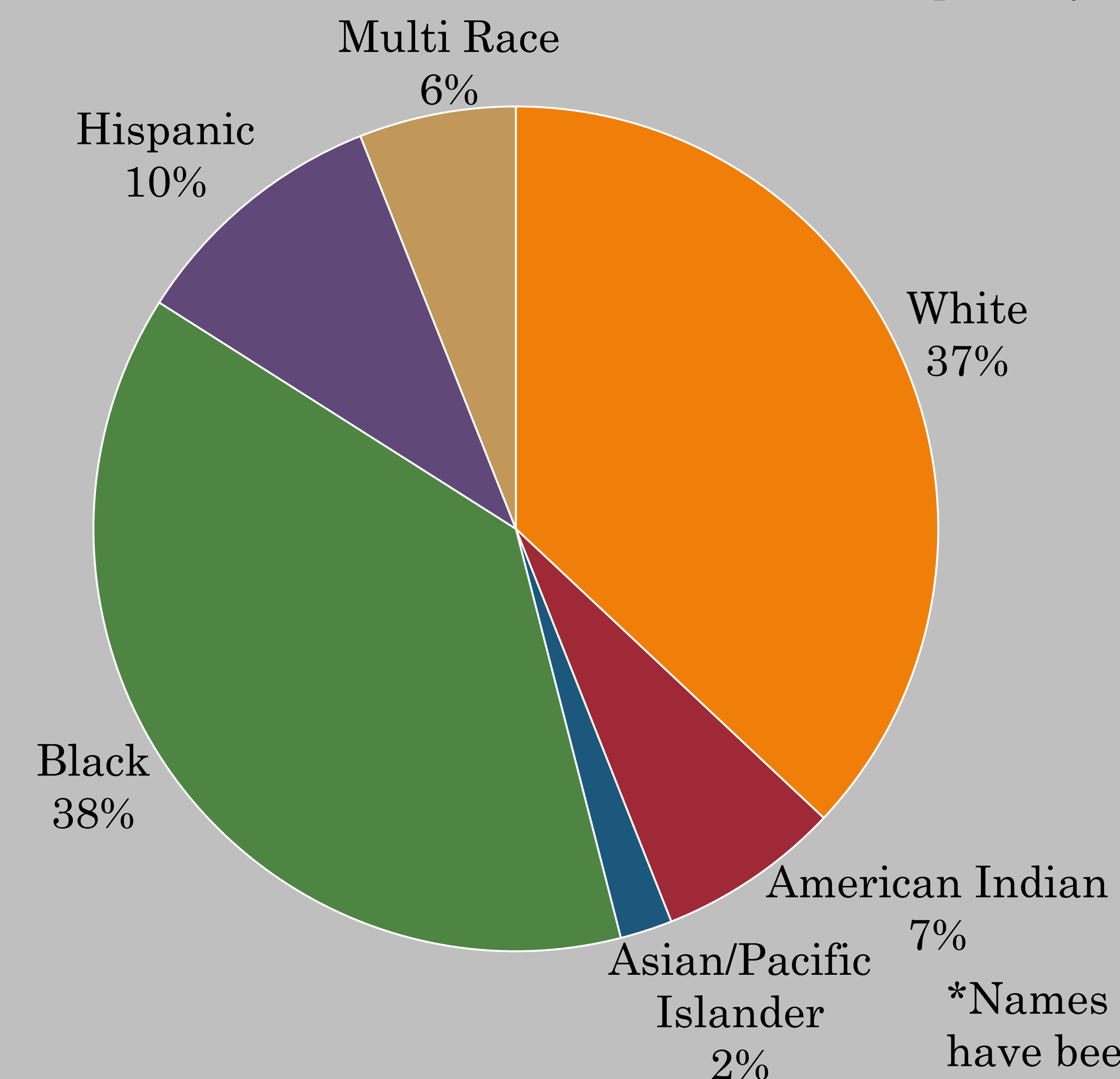
45.4% of Total Disciplinary Actions

61% of Youth Arrests

## Conclusion

Minneapolis community members are continuously at work to dismantle the school-to-prison pipeline by developing restorative practices as an alternative to discipline similar to zero tolerance (i.e out of school suspension, expulsion, detention, etc). In an interview, juvenile defense attorney K explained the creation of “family group conferences” in which the student involved in the incident sits down with anyone they deem as family along with school faculty in order to have a conversation and also create goals for the student. It is critical to build on this and examine the processes in which students are criminalized. My goal is to create an informative zine in order to create change through dialogue.

2014-2015 School Year % Total Disciplinary Actions



“I need you to understand this game”

-L\*, a high school educator to youth

\*Names of people and organizations have been kept anonymous

## Analysis

The data reveals the significant disparities across multiple factors of a student’s identity. In her book, *Pushout*, Monique Morris (2015) explains that “[Educational institutions] churn out individuals who will adeptly maintain the status quo”(26-7). Students of color, those with disabilities, and those who are LGBTQIA+ are consistently criminalized and monitored at greater frequencies because they deviate from the privileged white, heterosexual, upper middle class male society. For them to access education means to challenge the systems of power in place that deny them as anything but profitable productions of labor.